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CHARLES HENRY LEE — OUR GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

DAVID CORT — PROMETHEUS ON THE FIRE ESCAPE

MAX FISCHER

HUGH S. TAYLOR

june 6

volume LVI, number 9, 1952

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Editor*
JOHN COGLEY: *Executive Editor*
JAMES O'GARA: *Managing Editor*
WILLIAM P. CLANCY: *Assistant Editor*
WILLIAM PFAFF: *Assistant Editor*
(on leave with the Armed Forces)

Associate Editors:
JOHN C. CORT, FRANCIS DOWNING
PHILIP T. HARTUNG: *Cinema*
WALTER KERR: *Theatre*

Contributing Editors:
PHILIP BURNHAM, ANNE FREMANTLE

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1952, in the U. S. A., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada, $7 a year; Foreign $8. Single copies, 15c.

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THE
Commonweal
week by week

THE ECONOMIZERS

SINCE the Korean War the lush pictures of what could be done if so many billions were not spent for armaments have had little play in this country. There are fewer daydreams about the sort of home, education and personal belongings that would be available for every American family if the sums allotted to arms were instead divided up among the citizenry. A little matter of survival has taken priority.

And so billions of dollars have to be contributed by the American taxpayer (and his descendants) for national defense and the strengthening of front-line allies. It is a matter on which Americans have no choice.

To undertake expenditures on the present scale entails a heavy strain. It is debatable whether just now they act as a good stimulus or a harmful drain for the national economy. But without a strict system of price, wage and priority controls, which is hardly politically feasible, such expenditures inevitably produce inflation. This in turn impairs the livelihood of many citizens, particularly those dependent upon fixed incomes. There are few Americans who welcome the mounting national debt and the progressive devaluation of the dollar. As any taxpayer can testify, the price of survival comes high in monetary terms.

The sums which the Pentagon and the Administration request of Congress are carefully worked out. They cover operations already in progress and essential programs developing from what is now at hand. They do not constitute an "asking" figure. Thus cuts "across the board" for defense or foreign aid expenditures threaten to impair such programs all along the line.

Yet that is the form which the big cuts in Congress take: four billions from the President's request for national defenses; one billion, and then seven hundred millions more, from the foreign aid appropriations. Under the pressure of national business lobbies and local businessmen, economizing Congressmen have slashed heavily. They have not argued against certain specific items; they have simply voted to reduce the appropriations without regard to the havoc which will ensue—even making it necessary on occasion to produce some essential weapon over here which we could have had abroad at one third the cost.

If this is an election year, it is also a crucial stage for the West's defenses. The new peace agreement with Western Germany constitutes a climax in the preparation of European defense, for it coincides with the creation of a European Defense Community with a single army. What the Soviets will do about Berlin and the whole German settlement depends in great measure on the firmness the United States now shows. The case is the same in Korea. It is hardly the time to jeopardize what America and her allies have thus far accomplished or to give any serious indication that determination to hold the line is beginning to subside.

CUTS "across the board" should be out for the duration. Survival comes only at a substantial price. This is not to say that certain revisions of the whole defense program may not be called for to meet constantly changing world conditions. Among the informed some sentiment is growing that concentration on immediate defenses for the Ruhr, the Suez Canal and Malaya would prove in the long run more important than a slower build-up for an all-out war with the Soviet Union. The theory is that these key areas would be essential in any protracted conflict.

Here the argument shifts from the quantitative to the qualitative, as it would in the case of where to concentrate for the most effective planes and missiles. There is no guarantee that changes would cost less. But our quarrel with the economizers is that, despite all that has been accomplished and all that is at stake, they act simply on the basis of dollars and cents. In their economy efforts on behalf of their constituent taxpayers, they risk another big war which, among other things, would increase expenditures tenfold.

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TO THE WOLVES

IT just happens that within one week recent editorials in The Commonweal were approvingly cited by the polar extremes of New York journalism. On May 18 the Communist *Worker* ran a story under a five-column head: "A Leading Catholic Journal Blasts 'My Son John.'" On May 21 the Hearst *Journal American* commented on our editorial "The State of Liberalism," under the heading: "Now Liberals Are Exposing Liberalism," meaning us.

At least in this case, the *Worker* proved to be more reliable than the Hearst paper. All the quotations from The Commonweal in the Communist paper were exact, none taken out of context. The *Journal American* resumé of our editorial bore only slight resemblance to the original.

For instance, we learned from the *Journal American* that in the Liberalism editorial we had "approached the seat of repentance" for our past sins in supporting "much New Deal internationalism and aspects of the welfare state." We learned that we were now engaged in chiding liberals "for seeking even yet to bring on a totalitarian system, under a false name." The impression was given that we coolly equated liberals with fellow travelers and then went on to condemn them for favoring "economic controls, labor bossism, managed currency, Socialized Medicine—and so on." The unwary *Journal American* reader might well have concluded that suddenly and unaccountably The Commonweal—once a "Leftist Roman Catholic publication"—had come round to adopting not only the viewpoint but the vocabulary of the Hearst press.

The *Worker* liked us on May 18 because we had editorially scored a movie which all good Communists too must find offensive. Even though we had our own and far different reasons for disliking the film, perhaps this Communist commendation made us fair game for Senator McCarthy. But then, just three days later, the red-white-and-blue guardian of one-hundred-percent Americanism and nineteenth-century capitalism pinned a medal on our penitent breast. Talk about Scylla and Charybdis!

The editorialist's lot, alas, is not a happy one. We fully expect to keep saying things from time to time which the *Worker* may find consoling, or that will fit in, after some tailoring, with the *Journal American* view. Only when these two journals both see eye to eye (as they have on such matters as the Marshall Plan, NATO, American "internationalism"—a dirty word in both camps—and defense spending) will we really begin to worry about having points of agreement with them. In the meantime, *honi soit qui mal y pense.*

HOUSEWARMING

MR. and Mrs. Charlie C. Crittendon live in Kansas City, Missouri. Recently they decided to move from one section of the city to another, and that decision may yet cost them their lives. Shortly after the Crittendons moved into their new home, a bomb was thrown through one of their windows. Only quick thinking by a chance visitor who threw the bomb out the door just before it exploded prevented death or serious injury. As it was, the bomb happily did no more than shatter the windows in the Crittendon home and in several others nearby.

This bomb-throwing incident was not the first attempt to evict the Crittendons by violence. The night they moved in, a similarly unsuccessful attempt was made with a gasoline-bomb which failed to explode. Numerous threats have been made against the family, and there is no particular reason to believe that the bombing attempts will stop at two. But so far, despite bombs and threats, the Crittendons refuse to be frightened; they plan to stay where they are.

The Crittendons are, of course, Negroes. For them, as for too many Negro families, the attempt to escape the ghetto means living, day-in and day-out, with the threat of sudden death. In some cases there are bombs, in others there is stoning or burning. In still others there is only the deadly

NEXT WEEK

RICHARD HAYES writes about the impact of the Eternal City on the Anglo-Saxon sensibilities of Eleanor Clark as recorded in *Rome and a Villa.*

"To the delineation of her subject—perhaps the most important the Western world can offer an artist today—Miss Clark bring a truly formidable set of resources: her sense of proportion and order are phenomenal and so is her architectural eye for scale. She has an unerring grasp of the fundamentals of any given historical situation—moral, physical and intellectual—and awareness of the *cost* of time and civilization and tragedy . . ."

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silence, the wall of hostility between the newcomer and the neighborhood. But whatever form it takes, the unreasoning prejudice is there beneath the surface, ready at any time to erupt into violence.

In a few weeks the two major parties will be meeting to draw up their platforms and to choose their Presidential nominees. It is therefore a good time to think of the Crittendons. It is a good time to remember the Moore case in Florida, the Clark case in Cicero, the many cases, publicized and unpublicized, all over the United States.

At both conventions part of the struggle will center on the controversial issue of civil rights. In the heat of the proceedings, with political horse-trading the order of the day, it would be easy for the delegates to lose sight of the real story—the Crittendon story, the Clark story, the Moore story—behind the formally phrased convention resolutions.

On such controversial matters the temptation is great to water down, to temporize, to avoid offending anyone. But it is a temptation to which we hope neither party will succumb. In his efforts to win his rightful place of equality in our society, the Negro citizen is entitled to every protection that law and organized public opinion can give. We hope that both political conventions will demonstrate, in the most forthright manner possible, that they support this point of view.

PEACE WITH GERMANY

THE signing of the contractual agreement with the German Federal Republic at Bonn, May 26, signifies a number of things. It marks a restoration of sovereignty to a defeated people after seven years of occupation. It accords Western Germany a status of equality in the councils of Europe. It constitutes a big step in the erection of the European defenses and toward the unification of Western Europe.

By the same token the contractual agreement ending the occupation statutes would seem to have made the wall between Western and Soviet East Germany more impenetrable; it has also stepped up the pressures on beleaguered Berlin. Provision is made for extending to a reunited Germany the terms agreed to by Britain, France and the United States, but the Soviets unquestionably would demand too much as a price for relinquishing their East German satellite.

In any event the main immediate task is that of integrating West Germany into the European community. It is partly a question of restoring national morale. The Schuman Plan is another sector of the job ahead. For Germany's rapid industrial recovery and expansion have reawakened her neighbors' fears of economic domination. For the time being German arms making is limited by contiguity to the Soviet frontier; Europe's major arsenals have to be at greater distances from the Russian airfields.

Yet it would all seem to go together. Only by focusing their great talents on the building of a new Europe of which they are a constituent part can the Germans accomplish their own national regeneration. Only by utilizing their considerable scientific, economic and military talents for the common good can they dissipate the envy and distrust of their neighbors.

CHURCH, STATE AND THE CATHOLICS

AN issue until recently confined to learned theological journals has become a matter of public interest—the theoretical question of Church and State in Catholic thought.

Due to the publicity Spain has received in late years and the dramatic nature of its Church-State liaison, the situation there has been widely taken as constituting the ideal Catholic arrangement everywhere, indeed as exemplifying the *only* relationship theoretically justified by the principles of Catholic political thought. It has been said again and again with snide overtones that such a situation as exists here is accepted by the Church grudgingly and only because Catholics are not strong enough to destroy the Constitution. This is said very knowingly despite the fact that the Spanish situation is not duplicated in such Catholic strongholds as Eire or the Catholic cantons of Switzerland and the provinces of Belgium.

Recent incidents indicate that among Catholics outside the Hispanic orbit, a quite different view of Church and State relationship, as abstract theory and as working principle, has gained widespread support. Today the Catholic as such seems no more wedded to the Spanish system than the Lutheran to Swedish intolerance.

Among Catholics on both sides of the Atlantic there is a growing suspicion of too-close Church-State liaison. We have had the recent exchange between the Spanish Catholic *Ecclesia* and the Jesuit weekly *America*. The editor of *America* aptly defended, both as theory and practice, the idea of Church-State relationship his magazine favors. Needless to say, *America's* view is closer to that of the Constitution of the United States than to the Spanish concept.

In Austria three hundred Catholic leaders,

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meeting under the direction of Archbishop Jackyn, recently issued a statement on what they thought should be discussed at a coming national Katholientag. The Austrians urged freedom for the Church and wholeheartedly repudiated any return to the "State Church" idea, to the old alliance between "the throne and the altar," to the days when the Church 'enjoyed' the protection of a political party, or to the "more or less violent attempts to realize Christian principles merely by secular laws and organizations."

At the time of Cardinal Segura's highly publicized statement on Protestant proselytism three Catholic publications, the *Indiana Catholic and Record, America* and The Commonweal, vigorously disagreed with the Spanish prelate. The current issue of *The Priest,* edited "by priests for priests," and published by *Our Sunday Visitor,* reprinted the three editorials, with the comment that they were "offered as expressions of the attitudes of the average American priest."

PATRIOTISM AND SUPER-PATRIOTISM

PATRIOTISM, rightfully understood, is a virtue. It is rooted in a natural love of one's country and binds a man to the service of the common good. It provides an intelligent and broadening basis for action within the community. But, like the other virtues, patriotism can be distorted. It can be pushed beyond its rational limits to become an irrational and dangerous thing.

One way this can happen is through a form of "super-patriotism" which demands an absolute, unquestioning conformity to some arbitrary norm of national behavior and seeks to punish all those who deviate from the norm. Super-patriotism, understood in these terms, ceases to be patriotism at all, because it has become essentially inimical to the best interests of the human community, to man's freedom and dignity. It has become a counterfeit thing, chauvinism or exaggerated nationalism—one of the major scourges of the modern world.

A time of national crisis offers a special temptation toward super-patriotism. When everything a country stands for is threatened, it seems much easier to fight back if a way can be found to identify the nation's enemies by some easy rule-of-thumb, some simple and rigid concept which will enable us to say, at one glance, "You are for us," or "You are against us." Here the super-patriot is ready to provide the clear-cut definitions. *He* knows where he stands; he is the original one-hundred percenter. And he is quite sure that any man who is only a ninety-eight percenter or who sees some things in gray rather than black-and-white is, at heart, subversive.

The super-patriots are very busy on the national scene these days. As the world's crisis is prolonged their definitions grow narrower, their voices louder, and their denunciations more bitter. Operating on almost every level of American life, they pay special attention to the media for the dissemination of ideas: schools and libraries, the movies and the theatre, the press, radio and television. They are attempting to make their own the special and important task of eliminating from these any propaganda which may serve the nation's enemies; their test of such propaganda seems to be any idea which fails to fit their own definition of one-hundred percent Americanism.

In an effort to determine to what extent the nation's free institutions, particularly its public schools and libraries, are being intimidated by self-appointed, super-patriotic pressure groups, the New York *Times* recently completed a nation-wide survey of their attempts at book censorship. The data obtained from the forty-eight state commissioners of education and from supplemental information supplied by leading educational spokesmen indicate that those in the community who refuse to accept a monolithic and anti-intellectual definition of "Americanism" must recognize the genuine dangers which the growing activities of these groups represent. They must begin fighting back in the name of another, more liberal American tradition—in the name of a rational patriotism.

As the *Times* is careful to point out, it is not the principle of censorship itself which it at stake here, nor is it the right and the duty of citizens to concern themselves with questions pertaining to the common good. The question is one of competence, authority, and intelligence. Most state education boards already have legally constituted committees to screen books for subversive and otherwise unfit material, and such boards should always be ready to hear the representations of citizens concerned with the protection of genuine American standards.

But this is an entirely different thing from the growing number of voluntary censorship groups which, from the depths of their well-intentioned ignorance, would impose on the country their own narrow definitions of morality and Americanism. Such super-patriots, all unknowingly, perhaps, are the worst enemies of everything for which they profess to fight. Their efforts toward arbitrary thought-control must be opposed at every step if the nation is not to become the victim of its own struggle to survive.

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Our Good Neighbor Policy Today

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA HAVE SERIOUSLY DETERIORATED

CHARLES HENRY LEE

IT is not necessary to be an expert on foreign affairs to realize that the era of warmth and friendliness that characterized our relationship with the other American republics during the Roosevelt Administration has been rapidly coming to an end. Franklin Roosevelt's personality and political acumen had popularized a development which actually had been initiated by his predecessor, Herbert Hoover. Roosevelt's spark gave life and meaning to what he termed the Good Neighbor policy. His death was followed by the disappearance of such able men as Sumner Welles and Nelson Rockefeller and the liquidation of some of the most important tools for implementing this policy. New men and new problems appeared on the scene. The Communist threat in Europe and Asia, the Marshall Plan and the Korean War all served to distract American attention from the Western Hemisphere. Initiative gave way to indecision and negative action.

In the past year-and-a-half news from Latin America has been generally discouraging. In Guatemala it has been a story of Communist infiltration of labor unions and a protracted dispute with the United Fruit Company. The United States has been pilloried as the bogey man of foreign imperialism. Discussions for a military agreement with Mexico broke down as a result of Communist and nationalistic propaganda. In Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Cuba and Brazil, where such pacts have actually been signed, a certain amount of popular opposition had to be overcome.

Brazil has issued a decree governing the treatment of foreign capital; because of its retroactive and discriminatory character it has alienated American investors and seriously injured the atmosphere for capital investment in that country. Bolivia has seen another Government overthrown by a *coup d'etat,* blame for which has been laid at the door of Washington because of the R.F.C.'s unwillingness to increase the price of tin. During the negotiations this agency had been told that failure to raise the price could only precipitate what has since taken place.

In Cuba a constitutionally elected government has been overthrown and replaced by a military junta. Here again, although the corruption and weakness of the prior regime must be acknowledged, democratic machinery has been jettisoned and power politics taken its place. Chile's copper strike, followed by denunciation of its accord with the United States, in the opinion of many reflects the weakness of that Government's democracy.

Argentina is working actively against the United States, despite the much debated loan extended her by the Export-Import Bank. In labor matters she has refused to become associated with either the Communist-dominated Latin American Confederation of Workers with headquarters at Mexico City or the Regional Organization of Inter-American Workers, with which both the CIO and AFL are affiliated. Instead the Peronista unions have set up an intercontinental body of their own called the Committee of Latin American Trade Union Unity for use as a platform from which to attack the United States. Recently an Inter-American Student Meeting in Argentina condemned the imprisonment of Collazo, who attempted to assassinate President Truman, and demanded his release.

THE deterioration of our relationship with the other American republics is a matter of public concern. Two former Assistant Secretaries of State have voiced their apprehension, Spruille Braden and Nelson Rockefeller. In an address before the Women's National Republican Club, Mr. Rockefeller reviewed the factors responsible for prevailing conditions and urged as the only solution a bi-partisan declaration that a strong and united Western Hemisphere is the cornerstone of U. S. foreign policy.

Concern has also been voiced in other countries. As one Latin American statesman put it, "There are times when the universal interest of the United States must take precedence over their Western Hemisphere relations—but not always." A new book by Colombian historian and expatriate German Arciniegas, called *The State of Latin America,* although more concerned with chronic than immediate ills, is obviously inspired by the same problem.

Mr. Lee served in Latin America for the State Department and later represented a large U. S. firm in Argentina.

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As Messrs. Braden and Rockefeller both pointed out, except for the untiring and devoted service of Edward Miller as Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, the United States would have lost even more ground in this area. They failed to say that the sudden and prolonged indifference which seemed to follow our too assiduous wooing during the war period is due in large measure to the weakened position of Latin America's spokesman in our Government. Mr. Miller is one of eight Assistant Secretaries whereas Sumner Welles was an Under Secretary who dealt directly with the President. Perhaps in this difficult period even a more highly echeloned spokesman might not be able to secure a better hearing for this area, or, more tangibly, greater recognition in economic aid programs, but at least he would be in a better position to make this transition more palatable to our Southern neighbors.

In commenting on Mr. Rockefeller's remarks the New York *Times* proposed a cabinet post for Inter-American Affairs as the best solution. This would create two foreign affairs departments and could hardly lead to good administrative coordination. It might be better to raise the responsibilties of the State Department official concerned with Inter-American Affairs to that of an Under Secretary. In addition, from the purely human relations standpoint, it is necessary that both the President and the Secretary of State see and receive the Latin American ambassadors more frequently. Roosevelt and Hull and Welles found time to do this even in the midst of World War II.

The sums designated for foreign aid for 1953 by the Mutual Security Program make the resentment of the Latin Americans quite understandable. Nearly six billion dollars for Europe, eight hundred million for the Near East and Africa, one billion for Asia and the Pacific, yet only eighty-four millions for the other American republics. There is no real reason why Latin America should expect a greater share of our aid, particularly since Colombia is the only Latin American nation to make a contribution of men to the Korean war. But the extent of Latin American disappointment is a good indication of the failure of the United States to make our position clear.

A REVITALIZATION of the Good Neighbor policy and an improvement of our relations with the republics to the South is not an insurmountable task. The initiative must come from this country. No special pronouncement is necessary, for the Good Neighbor policy is still in force. All that is needed is vigorous implementation.

Our policies toward Latin America must be formulated only after thoroughly examining and appraising all pertinent and essential factors. In this way the too frequent off-the-cuff and after-the-fact decisions that create an impression of poor statesmanship and inadequate understanding in the eyes of our Southern Neighbors will be avoided.

To gain proper respect our policies must reflect a due degree of realism rather than puritanical Victorianism. They should embody a frank understanding and appropriate expression. For instance, why should the United States accept the fiction that by supplying us with strategic raw materials, Latin American republics are making any special contribution to the Korean War effort for which we owe them a debt of gratitude? By failing to dispel this notion we are partially responsible for Latin America's disappointment at its small share in our foreign aid.

When a certain policy is finally adopted, it should be stated clearly and positively and the program for its implementation carried out promptly and vigorously. Much of our trouble has been caused by excessive vacillation and indecision in formulating policy followed by a purely negative approach. This creates doubt and confusion and seriously impairs any claim we might have to leadership. Policies that are adopted should reflect appropriate continuity rather than extreme and irreconcilable oscillations between impractical idealism on the one hand and shabby opportunism on the other. The recent history of our Argentine relations is a good example of what should be avoided.

ECONOMIC aid to Latin America should be extended as a mutually reciprocal benefit desirable for both creditor and debtor, grantor and beneficiary. If the proper degree of mutuality is jointly recognized, improvements in the investment climate can be suggested by the United States as conditions precedent to the extension of aid. These improvements will in turn pave the way for increased investment by private capital in the other American republics.

Our economic aid should avoid competing with private capital by unnecessarily stimulating increased statism. Instead there should be greater cooperation between private and governmental action so that the latter will serve to complement, supplement, and encourage efforts by the former rather than discourage and displace it. Political loans should be discontinued. They injure private investment, cast suspicion on our policies and actions, and generally end up in grief, e.g. the recent Export-Import Bank credit to bale out Argentina.

Military aid should be restricted to bringing as many of the Latin American military to this country for visits as possible, especially the younger personnel. In the absence of any immediate and close-range threat to international peace such as can be found in Europe and Asia, no real justification exists for large scale military aid programs, which in all too many cases would only

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serve to strengthen basically anti-American and despotic regimes.

Our informational and exchange program should be improved and expanded. Everything practicable should be done to augment our cultural ties, and nothing sounder can be accomplished than greatly to increase our exchange of persons. This exchange should be expanded to include large segments of the population as yet untouched by our efforts. The information program could be greatly improved by gearing it more effectively to meet the psychology and conditions of this area. It currently lacks a sufficiently spiritual approach. As a result concepts like democracy find little response because they are couched in purely materialistic terms.

A great opportunity was created for the advancement of our relations in this hemisphere by the enunciation of the Good Neighbor policy. Its early implementation raised our relations with the other American republics to a new level of dignity and honor. Since then considerable deterioration in relations has taken place. This condition fortunately has been the cause of much concern throughout the hemisphere. A desire to rekindle the sentiments by which this policy united the peoples of this hemisphere is apparent. The time for appropriate remedial action is at hand.

MAN ALONE

Prometheus on the Fire Escape

DAVID CORT

EVERY newspaper ran courtroom photographs of the principals in the affair. There was one of a handsome, smug, even self-righteous, boulevardier, who might have becomingly sat "ringside" at the gaudier East Side night clubs. This was the bookmaker who was testifying that he had bribed the police officers. The other faces had searching eyes and ruthless mouths but one could see that these were the good fellows; the bookie was the snob. These were the police officers, a former commissioner and a brace of inspectors, who were accused of taking the little snob's bribes.

The bookie was inscrutable, a self-made personality, *sui generis,* but the others were perfectly recognizable members of society. They had the faces of those who accept the world as it runs. For them, a thing could not be a corruption if it had ever been accepted by a man they knew as brave and good, a friend. They lived in the world, girt in values that had continuity. In the mornings, as they pulled on their pants heavy with the money, and looked at the morning sun, the hillside was no less dew-pearl'd, nothing less right with the world.

I showed the newspaper at lunch to my old friend in the night club business for whom it was breakfast.

"Just looking at the pictures, I'd say any one of those faces would take a bribe," he said. "If I were doing business with them."

I said something indignant.

His surprise seemed genuine. "You mean this kind of thing is news to you?"

When I said that I still had a reasonable doubt, he went on a little about the twilight world of a big city. He mentioned a former police officer who was known by tens, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of nightworking citizens to have been part-owner, while he held office, of a string of night clubs that pandered to the most degraded elements of the city. He told of a world-famous "clean" night club openly owned by a pathological criminal and secretly owned by one of the most powerful racketeers in America.

I had heard all three names and knew one of the men personally, but recently I had read most often of their charitable works. I had supposed they were all beyond ambition or avarice, having been translated to that rarer air of philanthropy which is the latter state of great wealth or great virtue. I don't mean that any of them had become elder statesmen, but I would not have imagined that any of them wanted anything bad enough to have crossed the street against the lights.

"If that is true, or any of it, somebody would certainly have done something about it before now," I said, not troubling to hide my disbelief.

"It just isn't done," my friend said. "Look. There used to be a captain in my precinct who broke every law on the books. Sure, he was crooked and maybe he was crazy. He ran a reign of terror. It got so bad the department had to investigate him. He committed suicide. Nobody had testified against him; nobody was going to. But it was so bad that if you dug the rest of your life, you would never find anybody to say a word against him. In fact, I'll bet the records showed he died a natural death. That man threatened to kill me. Told

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Now a free-lance writer, Mr. Cort was formerly an editor of Life magazine.

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me so. But what was worse he said he'd have my children killed. A whole year there, I couldn't sleep at night on account of him."

"And you didn't do anything about him?" I said.

"You don't understand," he told me. "You've got to show you can take it. Sometimes it's part of the deal. I just had to take it."

"Not like that," I protested. "That doesn't have to be part of the deal."

"You don't understand."

"I understand that if you take that, you're not against it, you're not against anything. And if you're not against anything, how can you ever be for anything?"

Even to myself, I sounded pompous just then, pompous and safe. And my friend had not been exactly safe, and was not being pompous.

The thought angered me and I got stubborn. "I still say it's wrong. I don't care how I sound."

"Sure, sure," he said. "Look at it. I'm not against a guy with an organization that can make me disappear off the face of the earth and no questions asked. A guy who feels like doing it, or even just tells me he feels like doing it. So maybe he can't do it, so what? Am I the guy that's got to prove it?"

"You're not yellow," I said, for indeed I knew he was not.

"No, I don't think I am," he agreed gratefully. "It isn't that at all. If I had gone up against that captain, or any of the others, I'd think I'd blown my lid. And so would everybody else. I know my friends would have begun to avoid me. My help would have quit. My credit would have been shut off." He smiled. "I'm pretty sure my kitchen would have been officially declared a health hazard, my exits a fire hazard, and maybe the insurance company would have raised my premiums."

"It would have been interesting to find out," I said, from the sidelines.

I looked again at the photographs in the newspapers. The really big one had a thin upper lip and pale guarded eyes that suggested a certain limited kind of working sense of humor. One side of his face was lined smoothly, the other was sweetly dimpled with the corrugated scars of hypocrisy. Almost all the others (one was cranky) were similarly loaded with this same unamusing sense of humor.

AS I drank my coffee, I glanced from the paper to the face of my friend.

He was a humorous man himself, but with a difference from these others. His face had the ordinary citizen's overlay of politeness, of the absence of power, of tolerant allowance for the continued existence of other kinds of people.

Somehow it occurred to me that he was the kind who would walk quickly past the cages of the big cats in the zoo and feel a trace of guilt because he was free and the lions and tigers and panthers were behind the bars. But he had just described to me a world where the polite and tolerant homo sapiens was the one in the cage, while the lions and tigers and panthers with the murderous sense of humor prowled freely past outside and stared contemptuously in.

As soon as I had the thought, I dismissed it. It seemed to me that it was a purely literary, or poetic, thought.

However, I remembered that I knew about the symbolic lions and tigers elsewhere, which were amused by watching me inside the cages they had made. I knew about the waterfront where the "shape-up" system had evolved into a situation where a single Communist boss could pick a crew that would sabotage outgoing war materiel and unload a Communist atom bomb or several or thousands. I knew, on the more ordinary level, about the real horrors of the famous food market in an unfrequented corner of the city where the people's vegetables were daily manhandled so as to acquire an outrageous addition in cost to the housewife and a layer of unnoticed but unspeakable filth.

I had not acted on either of these actionable knowledges. I was not "yellow" either, but I suddenly desisted from any further criticism of my friend.

"I wish you hadn't told me that stuff," I said.

"It's in the papers," he replied patiently, for he had had more practice than I.

He suddenly seemed devoid of a sense of humor. The lions and tigers, I thought, the ones looking in at us, were the only good fellows left. It must be wonderful to be a member of that fellowship, where everybody knew the appropriate joke for every occasion, even for the Flood, the Apocalypse and Armageddon.

Somehow I wanted to get away from my friend. So I stood up. He said patiently, "Don't worry about the world now."

"Not till they pay me for worrying," I said. "I'm walking up to the zoo."

IT was a quiet Saturday afternoon in the city. As I walked along a crosstown street, I was thinking how irritating an idea like that—the homo sapiens in the cage—can become. I wished I hadn't thought of the good-fellow lions and tigers walking the streets, for of course the picture was absurd. Ordinary people were passing me. And indeed the ordinary scene soon exercised its power to disperse such precious fancies.

A block later, I sniffed and identified the odor of smoke.

I stiffened at once, for though the smell of wood smoke is comforting to a countryman, it is unnatural and calamitous to a city man. I looked up and saw the visible curl of it bending over a renovated brownstone

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house ahead of me, on the opposite side of the street. Even before I had come level with the house, the fire engines were banging up behind me.

The house was evidently one of several that had been renovated as one, with a common entrance. From a third-floor window of one of the others, the heads of two women projected, their necks lengthened by their present self-appointed function.

The younger called authoritatively to the firemen, "On the top floor in the rear." Several helmeted firemen stopped and craned their necks. "Top floor, rear," she repeated. The firemen all started for the door at a trot, a hustling team taking the field, and the two heads were pulled inside.

A hose truck had moved down to the corner, near the closest hydrant. The hose had crawled into the doorway of the house. A fireman had returned to yell back, "More hose." Other men, running, but without waste of energy, pulled out the folded corners of the hose along its whole length on the street. "Nothing coming yet," one said and ran back to the engine. Another cry, "More pressure," was passed down the line. At least a dozen men, fastening coats and carrying axes, had disappeared inside.

For all this, the smoke had grown thicker. For the first time I noticed that the top floor windows in front were wide open and that two thin streams of smoke were issuing from them.

A moderate crowd of perhaps fifty citizens had assembled on the pavements and stoops opposite the calamitous house. A band of eight-year-olds had taken charge of the commentary. "Another false alarm," yelled one, noting the absence of the passionate, flickering red of fire hunger. "The water's in the hose," another reported.

The adult audience had so far reserved judgment. The professionals of the fire department had the business in hand. Nor was it yet clear whether this incident would dwindle away, or enlarge to the dimensions which might put it into the unspeakable terms of a story in tomorrow's newspapers.

Neutral, we waited. There was nothing to be seen except the wisps of smoke emerging from the two windows of the top floor, front.

And here at least there was a very small thing to see.

Somebody was behind the window opening on the iron fire escape. A glimmer of white moved behind the curtains. A little later it came right up to the window and took form as a man in a white shirt, leaning against the frame of the window. Whoever it was, he was standing in a river of smoke. Yet even from the street, one could sense an unnatural air of negligence. For fully five minutes, the figure hardly moved. And then it disappeared.

A minute later, with a coat and pullover sweater, it reappeared and emerged through the window onto the fire escape. It was a man in his early thirties, of a superior white-collar type, with a brachycephalic head and all his hair. He was wearing dark grey slacks and a tweed jacket of a good enough cut. He looked as if he might read a good deal and smoke a pipe. I had the social impression, I do not know why, that he had come to New York from the West or South five or ten years before.

However, his appearance greatly relieved the growing boredom of the eight-year-olds, as once the first scrawny martyr brought from the mob in the Colosseum the roar of their deepest hunger.

"Hey, look, he's gonna jump!" yelled one.

A thrill of excitement entered all the voices as they took it up. "Jump! Jump!"

THIS was not, however, the scenario as written. The man was examining the fire escape as if he had never really noticed a fire escape before. After a prolonged inspection and consideration, he climbed down the first flight of stairs, holding the railing and walking sideways with his face to the wall of the building.

This adventure brought him to the window on the third-floor, front, and I supposed that there he would rap on the window and ask his neighbor for permission to walk through the house to the stairway. However, he kept on going down the next flight of steps, to the second floor landing of the fire escape. Perhaps he was friendlier with the people on the second floor and planned to visit with them, on the natural excuse of this community commotion.

But he had stopped on the landing, as if he had no intention of rapping on the window.

If he had hoped to get to the street level, he had to go to work on an iron ladder which was in the customary, raised position. He gave this one look and turned his back on it. I supposed that it was unfamiliar to him, that he suspected it might jam, that he was reluctant to risk frustration in front of an audience and that he felt that the second-floor landing was as far as he wanted to run from the smoke.

This was all understandable. But it left him isolated on the fire escape with fifty people looking at him. They had watched his descent with absorption, examining him closely and forming their several tentative opinions of him.

His manner had continued negligent, as if this excursion down the fire escape had been a free choice, a whim he permitted himself. But now he made one small admission of the compulsive nature of his present position. Under a pretense of blowing his nose, he took out a handkerchief and quickly wiped his eyes, which must have been streaming from the smoke in the room. This finished, he turned and looked up and down the street with assurance, but not at the audience opposite.

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There was one inevitable and available support he had not yet called on. A minute later, he remembered it and lit a cigarette. He took a deep puff and then removed the cigarette from his mouth, holding it at the base of his fingers instead of with the tips, his hand half-closed in a fist. His negligence became at once more convincing. He even glanced at the crowd. Then, as if to make himself one with the crowd, he did what they were doing: he bent his head back and stared at the trickle of smoke coming from his own windows.

The cigarette used up ten minutes. But at the end of that time the smoke was undiminished, the crowd still waited and the man was still suspended in the barred iron cage of the fire escape, increasingly ill at ease, but conveying a resolution to hold his ground until he could climb back in his own window and disappear once again into his own private world, now probably somewhat smoke-damaged.

Certainly he had done nothing wrong or unnatural.

It was what he had not done. He had not been able, or not chosen, to knock on the windows of his own neighbors. To avoid asking them the small favor of letting him walk through their apartments from the window to the door, he had unhesitatingly preferred the pillory of the fire escape.

To flinch from so ordinary an act, to prefer discomfort, embarrassment and even danger, a man must be guarding some powerful and indispensable illusion. Such a choice gives away the heart's deepest secrets.

The man on the fire escape could only be saying that, even in the shadow of calamity, he was not part of anything. His inappropriate cigarette was a defiance of life as convincing as if he had shaken his fist at the heavens and screamed. All honor and dignity had been frozen into a paralysis that was his sole remaining response to any challenge. He had locked himself in the cage and given over the streets to the lions and tigers. The mischief had all its own way, while Prometheus lay chained to the cliff.

Suddenly I could not bear to go on watching this frozen and solitary honor. I walked away, and so for all I know he is still there, between heaven and earth, in his iron cage, smoking another cigarette.

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FROM FORMOSA

Island Fortress In the Pacific

FORMOSA is one of the most attractive fortresses the world has seen. The vapor of hot springs steam-bathes its mountain tops. Its foliage is streaked with showy flowers, and mountain goats wander casually on the hillsides. Bananas piled deep and yellow on every wayside fruit cart sell for as little as fourteen American cents a dozen.

But no resident of Formosa—Chinese, native Formosan or visiting American—is allowed to forget that the small island is a fortress. As Nationalist officials like to stress, Taiwan (Formosa) is at war. Tourists therefore are discouraged, frequent festivals and firecrackers are frowned upon and the military budget is topheavy. An announced twenty-four thousand policemen of many types keep a narrow-eyed watch on internal security.

The island Taiwanese, who became reluctant hosts to two million Chinese after Chiang's defeat, are not people to be swept off their feet by political convictions. They have let the war talk swirl by them intent on their main pursuits, which are the same as for millions of other Asiatics—getting enough to eat, building up their small enterprises, planting and harvesting and replanting their rice fields, raising big families and beating off subtropical diseases.

The Taiwanese, like their Chinese ancestors, are practical, independent, self-assertive, materialistic. Compared with other Asian peoples even their present lot is quite good. Although they are small islanders like the Japanese, the Formosans are better off—less crowded for one thing. Their farms average three to four acres against Japan's two. Their buildings are of domestic brick or stone, good sturdy materials with a longer life than Japan's flimsy soft woods. Occasionally you will find a Formosan brick farmhouse that has stood one hundred and fifty years and still has many years left. Clothing is expensive on Taiwan but food is reasonable and plentiful, as indicated by the island's ability to export rice last year. Even meat and eggs are common fare for the ordinary person, something unheard of in poorer Japan. Labor is cheap but no more so than in other Asian countries. The climate is mild, but wet.

Nationalist troops are everywhere. Soldiers, police and children appear to make up the bulk of the population. Of the three, the police make the best

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appearance. Sharp and young, they are rather nattily attired. The soldiers' average age reputedly is below thirty, but many of them served through the mainland civil war; they are getting along in years. The government wants to discharge them, and it is working on a plan to grant them plots of farmland. These men were fighting when they should have been learning a civilian trade. They are not equipped to earn a living. They do not even know the local Formosan dialect. Their homes, and often their families, are on the mainland.

To the civilian eye the troops look fairly shabby, but both American and Chinese officials claim that their military aptitude is excellent. No one claims that army training is complete or present equipment adequate. Lower level army training is considered good but training on higher levels and in combined big operations inadequate. The troops also need more training in the use of new weapons, and the Chinese expect more Americans to be sent out for that purpose. Top Chinese military leadership still is weak.

CLOSE controls on entry and exit have helped keep the island free of undesirables. Getting into the Nationalist fortress means a three or four week wait for clearance. It requires detailed entry blanks and three photos. Getting out doesn't take so long, but it involves application permits to depart, two more photos, trips to provincial and district police headquarters, and a final okay stamped on the passport.

If the visitor wants to travel, he finds more red tape. To go to the mountains, he applies in writing to the foreign affairs section of the provincial police and submits two more photos. Alien travelers are forbidden to take cameras, radio receivers, or weapons, or to hunt. They have a seven-day time limit for their round trip, and their lodging is limited to hotels approved by the local police.

If the visitor has to submit these routines several times, Formosans face similar checks constantly. They carry identification cards to flash for police at any time. Residents going outside city limits, even overnight, must notify the police. Police are everywhere—traffic police, harbor police, peace preservation police; highway, railroad and ordinary administrative police and, within the latter, foreign affairs and economic police. There are plainclothesmen in the criminal detection police and investigators for the economic police. Not to mention the shadowy realm of Chiang Kai-shek's personal secret police and the forces of the Nationalists' ministry of national defense.

This whole intricate security network, in official opinion, explains the orderly oasis that Formosa has become in the troubled Far East. Police are deemed fully capable of putting down any riot; their preparedness acts as a deterrent. In Formosa, an outbreak like the recent one in Hongkong would bring out the armed peace preservation corps, the administrative police and the criminal detection police with their armored and radio cars. Thanks to all of them, the disturbance would have been squelched.

THE effect of their tribulations lives on in Formosan behavior. On an island more prosperous, less overpopulated and better fed than Japan, the people show each other and foreigners less consideration and less kindliness. People are argumentative. Suspicion is visible on small provocation. Pedicab drivers and others offering small services cannot be relied upon to accept the same price they agreed on originally. Few persons are seen buying or reading newspapers. Conversation is a little-practiced art. Passengers jostle each other on the transportation system where the pushing is so habitual that no one considers it rude. Formosans fall into line almost automatically for buses, trains and other purposes, but they defeat the purpose of a line by admitting flocks of friends. Sanitation is little known to the masses. Profuse spitting, scattering of refuse at the most convenient place, lack of personal cleanliness, and amazing inattention to sanitation in shops and business places are characteristic.

With American aid and direction and Chinese-Taiwanese cooperation, plans are moving along or programs being tried out on some of these problems. Land reform, of course, has been in the forefront of the island's more publicized advances. Land rent reduction and lengthening of the tenant farmer's lease have been the first steps in the reform. Slashing rents from as much as 70% of the tenant's major annual crops to only 37.5% has been especially lauded as a great agricultural triumph.

Formosa could and should produce all its own fertilizer. It should expand food processing, the present top industry, build up a textile production system, and develop chemicals, paper-pulp and plastics. Electric power is the chief ingredient necessary right now to make these plans work out. More power is being produced now than under the Japanese, but industries are growing faster than the hydroelectric potential. But new plants are now under construction.

American and Chinese experts alike are certain Formosa can be made self-supporting, except for direct military needs, if light industry can be fully developed. Agriculture can't do the job alone because of the rapidly growing population.

Formosa's population has one trait that should help the island realize its hopes. The people are tirelessly interested in their own welfare. But unless their natural aggressiveness is put to good use, it will exhaust itself in hopeless competition. Although pedicab drivers, shoe

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shine boys, fruit peddlers and school age newsboys are now pitted against each other desperately for a few clients a day, Formosa has potentialities for quite another kind of existence. Today subject to the drain of military spending, the island has a chance of becoming prosperous agriculturally and industrially. If such an economic foundation can be established, islanders would begin competing with each other for better homes, educations and living conditions. Eventually interest can be extended beyond purely personal welfare, where it lies today, to bigger issues. Then the average Formosan might begin to understand American aid.

JEANNE RIHA.

WASHINGTON

Gathering of The Liberal Clans

THE Fifth Annual Convention of Americans for Democratic Action, held recently in Washington, was a lively affair. Press reports concentrated mainly on President Truman's speech, with its slashing attack on the oil and power lobbies, its uncompromising stand for civil rights, and its excoriation of the "dinosaur wing" of the Republican Party, as well as on the convention's decision not to endorse any Presidential candidate at this time, even though Governor Stevenson had strong support among the delegates.

This was by no means the whole story, however. There were speeches by liberal (in the ADA sense of that word) Presidential candidates: Hubert Humphrey, the keynoter, a favorite son of ADA, the impassioned, caustic liberal ("Never underestimate the capacity of the Republican Party to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory"); Averell Harriman, the skilled administrator, whose candidacy has greatly improved his former oratorical limpness, but who still tends to mumble the second half of otherwise forceful sentences; Brien McMahon, liberal in outlook but still very much the professional politician ("We Democrats make up the party that has dared to be right"); and Estes Kefauver, voicing the usual liberal platform (except for his vagueness on civil rights), but in an unusually softspoken voice and conciliatory manner.

In addition to passing a resolution denouncing Senator McCarthy, the convention adopted a statement on the coming elections, drafted by its Political Policy Commission, stressing the desirability of nominating liberal Vice-Presidential, as well as Presidential, candidates ("This organization will strongly oppose any ticket on which liberalism and reaction are combined for the sake of an artificial 'balance' "), and authorizing ADA's National Board to endorse a Presidential candidate after the major parties have held their conventions.

The Domestic Policy Commission, under the chairmanship of Robert Nathan, produced a long and comprehensive report. In the field of civil rights and liberties, it condemned the Smith and McCarran Acts, as well as what has come to be known as McCarthyism, and urged legislation to end all forms of racial and religious discrimination. This last demand was given further weight when a Negro delegate was refused service in the drugstore of the otherwise nonsegregated Hotel Statler; protests were sent to the management, but nothing came of a motion to picket the drugstore.

The education section of the report urged federal aid to nonsegregated public schools and withdrawal of tax exemptions from "private non-sectarian" (i.e., nonparochial) schools which "practice segregation or discrimination."

The report demanded a fuller and more efficient mobilization program and criticized the Office of Defense Mobilization unsparingly for its "planless, stopgap, grab-bag procedure." As if this were not an unkind enough cut at Charles Wilson, an amendment was proposed and adopted in support of the union's position in the steel dispute.

THE manpower section of the report called for steps to eliminate unemployment and unfair labor practices. An amendment favoring Universal Military Training was defeated by a narrow margin.

Inflation controls, including the stabilization of wages and prices, were pronounced essential, and any weakening of them, such as the price increases permitted by the Capehart amendment, deplored. The report also urged the government to give more aid to small businesses, on the ground that they tend to be slighted in the awarding of defense contracts and would be the first to go to the wall in case of a recession.

The Taft-Hartley Act, according to the report, "has impeded union organization and aggravated labor-management relations and now jeopardizes our national economy and defense effort," and its repeal was therefore demanded. Some delegates suggested amendment rather than repeal, but the majority felt that nothing short of outright repeal would wipe out the anti-labor stigma attaching to the title and preamble of the act.

Much greater governmental efforts in the fields of slum clearance, public housing, defense housing, and rent control were demanded. The delegates expressed strong opposition to racial segregation in public housing, and seemed to prefer no public housing to segregated.

Affirming its belief in a free and competitive economy, the Domestic Policy Commission's report went

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on to demand a more vigorous enforcement of the anti-trust laws, especially in the field of communications (the press, the film industry, publishing, radio, and television). Where this does not suffice, the report stated that "monopoly must be curbed by governmental yardstick operations or placed under public ownership."

The convention went on record in support of President Truman's national health insurance program, increased Social Security coverage, and the establishment of a Department of Welfare in the Cabinet. It opposed the publicizing of relief rolls and the voting of general veterans' pensions, and denounced the American Medical Association's efforts to defeat President Truman's health program.

The report advocated abolition of the electoral college, direct popular election of the President and Vice President, elimination of all "discriminatory restrictions upon the right to vote," and direct primaries in all federal elections.

The commission favored farm price supports, but urged more emphasis on helping the producer, as distinct from the processor or distributor, than exists at present. It also expressed concern for the lot of low-income farm families and migrant labor.

Praising the stabilizing role of cooperatives in the nation's economy, the report urged the government to continue its policy of liberal credit facilities and tax exemptions for them.

In the field of conservation, the report proposed the creation of TVA-type authorities for the Missouri, Columbia, Arkansas, and Connecticut River basins. It urged the implementation of the Hoover Commission's recommendation that the civil functions of the Corps of Engineers be transferred to a single national resources agency. Construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and continued federal regulation of offshore oil resources and natural gas distribution, were also recommended.

The report pointed to various evils in the civil service —occasional corruption, poor morale, and the forty percent turnover among government employees. Better pay and working conditions, and supervision of the civil service by an agency responsible directly to the President, were recommended as antidotes.

The report ended with an exhortation to all citizens to participate actively in the civil defense program, and characteristically expressed concern lest the program might lead to some infringement of civil liberties, but it betrayed no understandings of the present pitiful weakness of our defenses against possible hostile air attack.

THE report of the Foreign Policy Commission was considerably shorter and less controversial. The proper goals of American foreign policy were declared to be peace, resistance to Communist aggression, support of the United Nations, and extension of freedom and prosperity to those areas which do not enjoy them now. An amendment in favor of world government was defeated. The report advocated increased technical assistance to underdeveloped areas, through the United Nations in so far as possible.

To meet the Soviet threat the report urged the discriminating use of bread, ideas, and negotiation, as well as arms if necessary. "The major objective of American policy must plainly be to avert war."

The European section of the report endorsed NATO, the Schuman Plan, democratic reunification of Germany, and rearming of Western Germany in the event that democratic reunification proves impossible (an amendment to strike this provision out was defeated). The political regimes of both Spain and Yugoslavia were condemned, but the report favored aid to the latter in order to combat Stalinism and "help Yugoslavia resist Soviet aggression."

The section on Asia proclaimed support of political and economic independence for the Asian peoples, endorsed the Japanese peace treaty, and opposed recognition of Communist China "unless and until it abandons aggression." An amendment in favor of discontinuing military aid to Formosa was defeated.

The liberation of the peoples of the Middle East and Africa from colonial rule was the main theme of the sections on those areas. Finally, the report noted with concern the growth of right-wing movements in Latin America.

ALTHOUGH there was vehement disagreement on certain points, this program accurately reflects the viewpoint of the non-Communist, non-fellow-traveling "liberal-labor coalition" which makes up ADA. With many of the individual recommendations there could be little disagreement, except by those who believe in the perfection of the status quo. ADA's domestic program taken as a whole, however, would represent, if adopted, a long step in the direction of the welfare state. While its members obviously are acutely aware of the dangers of excessive individualism and conservatism, the proceedings left me in doubt as to whether ADA is sufficiently aware of the dangers inherent in centralization, in excessive uniformity, and in quick drastic reforms as opposed to more gradual change.

Impatient, uncompromising, secular-minded idealists, the delegates struck me as having little regard for religion, cultural values, or the psychology of people different from themselves. They seemed to place too much faith in the power of legislation, and to be too prone to dismiss opposition to their ideas as the work of "reactionaries." There is undoubtedly a place in the American political scene for ADA, but I doubt whether there is a place for the truly independent voter in ADA.

HAROLD C. HINTON.

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THE STAGE

NEW FACES OF 1952

LEONARD Sillman's new musical opens with a juicy collection of old faces—a series of photographic panels celebrating the talents of Francis X. Bushman, Eva Tanguay, Rin-Tin-Tin and other upstarts of 1893. Immediately thereafter a comedian named Ronny Graham strides on stage and promises to bring the whole business up to date by adopting the latest Broadway fad—he is going to read the entire show from a manuscript. All of this constitutes an extremely engaging opening for a sly, easy, intimate revue, and much of what follows is in the same bright and cheerful vein. Such lapses as it has stem from a certain cool and calculated quality about its comedy.

Mr. Graham, for instance, soon turns up as a groovy musician and goes into what is pretty patently not a theatre sketch at all, but a night club routine. His technique, and his material to boot, is rapid-fire, random, verbal, and fairly mechanical. This air of the cabarets reappears from time to time throughout "New Faces" and robs it of some of its freshness. But the songs, dances, and sketches strike an entertaining average, and they follow one another at almost lightning speed.

The best of them are: a Boston Beguine wickedly sung by Alice Ghostly; two solo appearances, "Bal Petit Bal" and "Monotonous," by a fascinating newcomer named Eartha Kitt; a report on a three-day jaunt to the Congo written and performed by Paul Lynde; an admirably brief little domestic lament called "Guess Who I Saw Today;" a pleasant dance arrangement of "Love Is a Simple Thing;" a conventional, busy, but pretty funny sketch about the card games of the future; a rollicking hoedown somehow or other involving Lizzie Borden; a puppy-love chant, "I'm in Love with Miss Logan," nicely performed by Robert Clary; and "Whither America?", a pantomine bit which defies rational examination.

The worst: a duet in which Ronny Graham and June Carroll spoof Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, but without any very clearly defined point of view; a catch-as-catch-can first act finale; a wandering and pretty flat travelogue composed entirely in clichés; and a nostalgic disaster labeled "Penny Candy."

The unevenness of the material, however, has very nearly been concealed by the adroit and confident management of John Murray Anderson, and the backgrounds provided by Raoul Pene du Bois are unfailingly handsome. The show as a whole emerges as very satisfactory summer entertainment, and if you aren't insistent about top-level comedy, I'm pretty sure you'll like it. (*At the Royale*)

TOVARICH

THE recent City Center revival of this Robert Sherwood-Jacques Deval comedy suggested that there wasn't much wrong with the sixteen-year-old play that a better production couldn't cure. Aside from a delicate climax in which Soviet Russia is given the wherewithal to hang onto some disputed oil fields, the piece about Tsarist exiles working as Parisian domestics still seems brightly written and soundly constructed. As directed by Harry Horner, though, its acting styles were anything but uniform, it was overloaded with fake front-curtain atmosphere, and it seemed to be in need of a lot more rehearsal. Uta Hagen, Herbert Berghof, Paula Laurence, Romney Brent, and Luther Adler were among those who played it vigorously, but never quite together. *(Completed its two-week run at City Center)*

CONSCIENCE

MAURICE Schwartz, best known for his long, devoted, and successful service to the Yiddish Art Theatre, was ill-advised to bring Pedro Bloch's monodrama to Broadway. The material was straight corn, the translation from the Portuguese appalling, and Mr. Schwartz' style seems to me too majestic and ornate for the business of conversing casually with an audience. "Conscience" had to do with a runaway husband's return to his deserted and tomblike home—apparently his young son was buried in the front yard—and the madness which overcame him when he realized the folly of a misspent life. It was madness, all right. *(Closed at the Booth)*

WALTER KERR.

THE SCREEN

INSIDE STRAIGHT

THE surprising thing about "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" is that in several ways it is an improvement over the original story. Bret Harte's famous tale is really a vignette, well written but slight, with a curious mixture of sentiment and realistic melodrama. Its plot concerns the four people (two ladies of easy virtue, a gambler and a drunkard) who are kicked out of Poker Flat during the Gold Rush Days when this small town suddenly goes on a clean-up campaign. Although the screen play, written by Edmund H. North, uses dialogue that smacks too much of the modern, it has expanded the original story intelligently and it develops its characterizations extremely well.

The movie opens with some handsomely photo-

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graphed atmosphere shots of Poker Flat at night. A man robs the assay office and kills two of the citizens. The next day the indignant townsfolk run out Poker Flat's four shadiest characters: Cal (excellently played by Anne Baxter) who is secretly married to the robber; the Duchess (Miriam Hopkins); the gambler (Dale Robertson); and the drunkard (Billy Lynn), who is not too unhappy about the whole thing because for the first time in his life he has a horse of his own. The gambler agrees to guide the other three over the mountain pass, but the Duchess is thrown from her horse and hurt; so the party has to move slowly. They meet up with a young couple on their way to Poker Flat to get married. When the snow and wind whip up into a storm, these six find shelter in a deserted cabin.

They have little food. The snow storm gets worse. The addled drunk stampedes the horses who run away. Trouble piles on trouble. The young woman who was on her way to Poker Flat is pregnant and becomes ill. Her fiance braves the snow to go to Poker Flat to get help; and Cal gives him some of the money which her robber-husband gave her for safe keeping. Then Cal's husband, a vicious criminal (Cameron Mitchell) turns up to collect his loot and wife. But in the meantime the four outcasts have changed considerably. They have softened and they've learned to be interested in others than themselves. And Cal's brutal husband turns out to be the real menace in their working out their problems and, in fact, to their very existence.

Joseph Newman has directed this story well—with touches that may occasionally be too arty, but with emphasis on character and suspense that build up as the situation grows more tense and violent. The finale may be a little more sentimental than Harte's, in which practically everyone dies, but "Outcasts" will probably hold your interest to the very end and you won't feel too cheated by its rather conventional "western" finis.

IF you prefer your thrills in a modern setting, you'll find "High Treason" another of those well-made English chase movies. Its plot, showing how Scotland Yard thwarted an attempt by foreign agents to sabotage Britain's industries,, has been expertly directed by Roy Boulting (co-author of the script with Frank Harvey) who with his brother John made such memorable films as "Thunder Rock" and "Seven Days to Noon."

The action of "High Treason" skips around quite a bit in showing how foreign agents (country not named but suspiciously Communist) and English accomplices go about the business of sabotage and how the Yard and Military Intelligence go about their counter-spying and capturing these saboteurs. Although the picture has no big-name stars, its cast is good throughout, and excels, as so many English films do, in well-played minor roles. Boulting has been wise in inserting, in between stiff scenes of plotting and detecting, some very amusing comedy relief. We see an army major spying on the foreign agents at a very esoteric musical recital. The satire on musicales of this kind is so wonderfully done you can hardly concentrate on the plot maneuvering. Later we see the foreign agents, an ill-assorted group of highbrows and more practical enthusiasts, arguing as to whether a certain Jimmy is a traitor to the cause—and if so what kind. We also see this Jimmy in action (he's a weak character who was somehow trapped to work against his country—giving part of the film a "My Son John" angle) in his radio-repair shop. Into this store comes a neighbor woman, just at the time when the plot is thickest, to prattle on and on about her tea kettle which has not been boiling properly, not even singing and what's more not even getting warm.

It is just this kind of nonsense stuck in the middle of all the excitement that makes the film even more exciting. But you mustn't think that "High Treason" is laughing off its enemy. The picture treats its espionage agents as very formidable, by no means as push-overs, and admits these agents turn up in all classes and types of job. In the movie one of the enemy agents is an M.P.

AN American film dealing with a similar subject, and made by Louis de Rochemont with the cooperation of the F.B.I., has one of its trapped Communist agents say: "For every one you arrest, there are many more ready to take over." Called "Walk East on Beacon," this movie rightfully takes itself and this country's problems with Communist agents very seriously. Most of the picture is like a documentary showing how the spies work and how they force people who are not wrapped up in their cause to cooperate. Fortunately the film also shows how the F.B.I. tracks down the agents and their dupes.

If "Walk East on Beacon" has any major fault it is that in taking its subject matter so seriously, it forgets to be entertaining. Director Alfred Werker uses his cast (George Murphy, Finley Currie, Virginia Gilmore, Louisa Horton and many others) well to heighten suspense; but the picture never has those little comic touches found in "High Treason" which humanize its characters. "Walk East on Beacon" is a dry, visualized lecture informing the audience that there are Communists in our midst and we have to fight them.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Business Before the Bar

BUSINESS BE DAMNED. By Elijah Jordan. Schuman. $4.

By FRED WIECK

THERE are still many whose gorge rises when corporations undertake to transmute the wives of junior executives into international business machines. This book is for them. It is a formidable book: a brilliant polemic, a finely articulated social philosophy, and a therapy.

"Business" in Jordan's terminology is the urge to control the processes of social life for the sole sake of control, which, from modest beginnings as a state of mind, has grown into that huge, impersonal, objective power which legislates our lives according to "business necessity." This monster is oblivious of natural or cultural purpose, and incapable of moral action. Obedience to it condemns us to the death of a salesman; resistance, to a life fought uphill.

Since its birth, in the nineteenth century, the monster has fed upon the riches of nature and the wealth of human work, and has left ravaged forests and drudgery in its path. Now it is turning on the treasures mankind has accumulated in its long, ardent history and embodied in the great cultural institutions: family, industry, education, religion, art, and politics. Today we are told that history is bunk; universities issue degrees in "garage accounting," priests go-get souls, art confesses itself commercial, and the million-dollar lobby decrees that the nation's business is business.

Jordan's therapy has two roots One is his moral philosophy which finds the basis of the good in action rather than a frame of mind—in works rather than in faith. The other is his view of modern society as a corporate structure made up of the cultural institutions, rather than a combination of individuals. "It is no longer men that are good or bad," he writes. "Moral capacity, which was traditionally, and in a simpler political structure, a function of the individual only, has in the modern corporate structure of the political body passed from the individual to the corporate person." The corporate body can be kept healthy only by morality and justice; these take their content from man's God-given capacities to create and to enjoy; and the agency by which they are to be re-established is the law.

Jordan's views, worked out in the last four chapters, lead to a radical revision of current moral, social, and economic thinking. He throws brilliant light on the problem of corporate responsibility—the problem that was botched at Nuremberg. He solves, I think, the old dilemma of which Berdyaev wrote, between the feeling of ownership toward objects of immediate personal use, and the sense of the fundamental sinfulness of property.

Yet there are many facets in his carefully constructed system which I would resist even against the claim of reason. Few men, in fact, are likely to agree with Jordan fully—but in so vigorous a thinker that is merely a measure of his originality. Complete assent is not the highest reward this book offers: in this book speaks a mind of great power, a moral man, and he deals with the basic problem that troubles us.

A Few Billion Years Ago

THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE. By George Gamov. Viking Press. $3.75.

By HUGH S. TAYLOR

THE Holy Father in an address to the Pontifical Academy of Science in November 1951 pointed out that modern science has "followed the course and direction of cosmic developments . . . (and) pointed to their beginning of time some five thousand million years ago." This little book of one hundred and fifty pages records that course and direction from the beginning and reviews critically the alternative claims of a "steady-state universe" championed by the Russian astronomer, Vorontzoff-Velyaminov, operating within the philosophy of dialectic materialism, as well as by the British astronomer Fred Hoyle, who has introduced the hypothesis of continuous creation of matter in intergalactic space.

Gamov himself strongly affirms the hypothesis of "beginning" a few billion years ago. Using a technique which Gamov points out would enable a forgetful Western rancher to find out when he let his cattle out to pasture, a British geologist, Arthur Holmes, has defined the time in question as 3.35 billion years. All estimates agree on an age between one and ten thousand million years.

This book will permit all kinds of scientists and also the intelligent general reader to familiarize themselves with "the course and direction of cosmic developments," in as nontechnical language as the subject permits. Mathematics are excluded but may be found in appendices. The use of the word "Creation" in the title is not supported by anything in the text. Had the author retained the word "Biography," which appeared in the second volume of the trilogy of which this is the third, he would have been closer to the contents of the book. The development of the universe or its evolution would have described the contents more scientifically if perhaps less arrestingly. At any rate, in an inimitable style, Gamov tells of the beginnings of the "great expansion," the making of atoms in the "universal cooking era," the hierarchy of condensations which yielded the planetary systems and, finally, the private lives of the stars.

This reviewer has been credibly informed that Gamov has studied a copy of the Holy Father's address to the Pontifical Academy of Science and forwarded to His Holiness a copy of this volume and its predecessors. Both agree that the passage in Genesis which reads "In the beginning there was light" is in close agreement with what the cosmogonist has found in his researches. Those who wish an elementary exposition of what happened biologically during the three to five billion

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years on this particular planet can, for an expenditure of 25 cents, procure from The Edward W. Hazen Foundation, 400 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut, a little booklet by Edward McGrady which also emphasizes a story not very different from that in the first chapter of Genesis and pleads for "serious attention (to) and deliberate emphasis" on the religious perspectives of all parts of the college curriculum, not only in the findings of nuclear physics and cosmogony but also in biology.

Days of Terror

AT THE DEVIL'S BOOTH. By Erwin Lessner. Doubleday. $4.95.

By GEORGE MILES

CHARLES PEGUY, a journalist and a soldier among other things, once wrote that the world was debased. Erwin Lessner, who was also a journalist and a soldier, makes nearly the same judgment in this book. The repeated acts of cowardice and treachery and betrayal and brutality which the hero faces in his fight against dictatorship might very easily have thrown him into the pit of despair.

Baron Rudolph Hossman controlled a chain of newspapers from Vienna when the Nazis seized power in Austria. He refused to collaborate, and, in fact, carried out sabotage at a time when he was under close scrutiny. In order to avoid arrest he went to Prague. But even in this flight he accomplished active resistance in the smuggling of the German Order of Battle. Despite hostility on the part of the Czech military men he convinced them of the authenticity of the highly secret papers and of the sincerity of his intentions to war against the Nazis with arms. When resistance collapsed and the Germans seeped into Czechoslovakia, Hossman was again in danger. He made a narrow escape to Norway.

Here, in microcosm, he was confronted by the ignorance, the fear, the treason and the rationalization which characterized the attitudes to Hitler's assaults throughout the world. In the lectures he offered at the University and in the articles he wrote for a socialist magazine he was a target of the appeasers, the traitors and the moderates. Finally, with the outbreak of the Russian-Finnish war, he accompanied a group of Norwegian volunteers to Finland.

Once again he found it necessary to overcome suspicion which was strangely directed at friends more fiercely than it was at enemies. He fought bravely and was decorated, but once more the power of the aggressor was too great and soon Hossman was in the awkward position of a volunteer in a country resisting one totalitarian government while accepting assistance from another. He refused to ally himself with the Nazis and moved to Swe-

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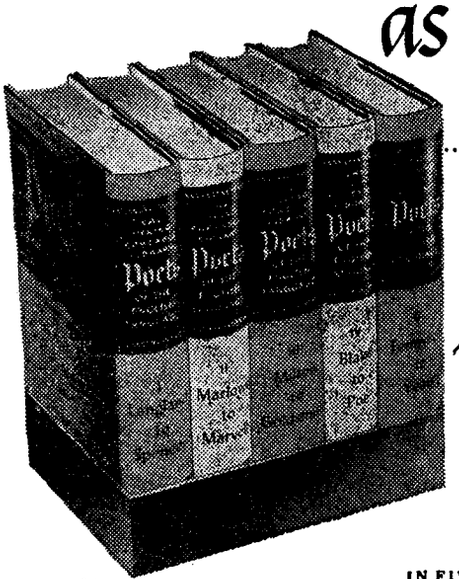

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THE ARTIST AT WORK, V

"One is tempted to conclude that what vitality Catholic literature enjoys today comes from without, rather than from within the tradition—that it is the non-Catholic common denominator which gives these writers vigor. But this conclusion is not, I think, entirely valid; it stems from an essential misconception of the nature of art.

"All art arises out of conflict—an opposition of terms. The basic art-conflict is the conflict of values, which in religious literature will be stated in terms of opposed religious values or, more commonly, of religious vs. non-religious values. It should follow, then, that the artist who knows the terms of his particular conflict best will realize it best, and will produce the most effective art. Hence, we might say, the convert, not the born Catholic, is best qualified to employ Catholicism in the creation of his art.

"But in drawing such a conclusion, we are overlooking the other side of the coin—the apostate. Here is one who has lived in the same two worlds as the convert. All else being equal, he should succeed as well as the convert in translating religion into literature. For if the ascent to grace is dramatic, the fall from grace is equally so, and equally important in the moral history of mankind which is literature."

—SAM HYNES
in The Commonweal
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den. In this place he sought and received fighting assignments in Norway where he repeated his distinguished action in a lost cause.

Ultimately, he was led into the hands of the Germans by a Swedish intelligence officer who pretended to send him on a new mission against his enemies. He suffered terrible tortures but was rescued by a Norwegian combat team, and, following more frustrations in Sweden at the hands of collaborators and legation officials, he crossed Russia and reached a ship which would carry him to America.

Lessner is reported as saying that the story is "90 per cent true factually." It sounds as if it is. The book was written in English and written well. The description of the Czech Sokol festival and the illusion of unity and strength it reflected, the account of the Gestapo searches and the dismal, dwindling meetings of the Communists in Prague following capitulation, the exciting scenes of the frigid warfare on the Finnish border and the totally depressing picture of Russia and Russians are especially well done.

There are moments when the story gives off a Hairbreadth Harry tone but these are infrequent. Lessner does not transform his material, he does not universalize the incidents or the characters the way a Silone does. Nevertheless his excellent journalism gives many valuable insights into the brutal, craven mentalities which came to the surface in the days when Hitler was marching. Many of his images elicit pity and terror and remain vivid for a long time. The terrified Jew who is set upon by the Nazi toughs in Vienna, the hostile Czech officers who interview the volunteer, the various arrogant visa clerks, dictators in miniature, who victimize stranded people, the money gluttons of all nationalities are properly, successfully depicted.

The presence in every country of heroic figures dispels the idea that the writer is a misanthrope. These people permit the novel to be "a message of hope," as Lessner intended, and they reveal that not everything is debased—although at times it seems to be.

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Modern Man Discovers Himself

THE AGE OF THE BAROQUE: 1610-1660. By Carl J. Friedrich. Harper. $5.

By MAX FISCHER

THE problems of the Baroque period have haunted European historians for decades and caused many hair-splitting arguments. But on this side of the Atlantic the expression "Baroque" (presumably derived from *barocco,* a term of the Portuguese pearl trade for irregular pearls) has hitherto been generally used for the fine arts only and with a certain depreciation of the style, which is little used in the architecture of Anglo-Saxon countries.

At the beginning of this century Europe began to speak also of Baroque literature, Baroque music, Baroque philosophy, Baroque piety, and of a specifically Baroque mind, found in the utterances of that age, even in such fields as political administration and foreign policy. Still we have lacked a comprehensive presentation of the Baroque age, a study of the totality of that historical period, such as the Renaissance as early as 1860 received in Jacob Burckhardt's brilliant *Civilization of the Renaissance,* a book which inspired at least a dozen additional Renaissance studies of the same type.

A glance at the title of this new book by Professor Friedrich of Harvard may give one the hope that here at last is a complete presentation of the Baroque age. But the limitation, *1610-1660,* immediately informs us that the book deals with only a segment of the period. The author himself admits that the origins of the Baroque are to be found in the second half of the sixteenth century and that this style did not end before the middle of the eighteenth. Like many European scholars, he stresses the unity of the Baroque as "one of the four or five most universally significant forms of expressions of Occidental culture," an age "intoxicated with the power of man," rich in extremes, combining the most terrifying naturalism with the most precious transcendentalism.

I presume that it is not the author but the publisher who is responsible for the absurdity of calling a study of only fifty years of history by the name of an age which, according to Mr. Friedrich's own assertion, lasted about two centuries.

That Mr. Friedrich covers only a fourth of his period is regrettable since he approaches the Baroque with congenial understanding and insight into its historical importance. "It was the age in which the world-view of modern man took definite shape and organized itself for the conquest of mankind. Whether it was a glorious achievement or a disastrous betrayal of human destiny seems more controversial today than it was in the intervening three hundred years." Friedrich emphasizes the unity of the manifold expressions of the Baroque mind in all provinces of life and its impact on Europe, since no country remained wholly untouched by it. "The situation is complicated by the fanning out of Italian, Flemish and other artists and musicians all over Europe; it often becomes very difficult to decide whether they were influencing or being assimilated. Nor was this cosmopolitan wandering entirely one-sided: Poussin spent most of his life in Rome, the German poet Opitz went to Poland, Descartes to the Netherlands, Grotius to France." The Baroque had a great influence even in Eastern Europe. "Indeed it may be said that Baroque is *the* European art form most nearly commensurate with the depth of feeling and the extravagance of conduct expressive of the Slavic spirit."

The author gives interesting glimpses of the Baroque's dual trend, toward mysticism and skepticism, the polarity between the carnal and the spiritual, their conflicts and their tensions. He recognizes the great urge of the period for unity of style: in the blending together of the castle and the surrounding landscape, in the beginning of city planning, as well as in the coordination of poetry and music in the opera and the oratorio. He stresses that we cannot link the feelings of the Baroque

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simply to the particular structure of the absolutist monarchy but that we find Baroque elements in the whole political life of the period. To those who claim that the Baroque is only a continental style, he extolls the works of Milton as masterpieces of Baroque poetry. Professor Friedrich insists that French *classicism* has characteristic Baroque features, and he praises Corneille as a dramatist with superb Baroque emotions. He would have liked to show also the "unique achievement of Molière's thirty-odd great comedies," but suddenly remembers (and it seems with resentment) that "they belong to the decade beyond 1660," which makes them beyond the scope of his book.

In addition to such productive reflections of a more general nature, the book treats of almost all the important features of its fifty year span with amazing, almost frightening, specialization. The author deals not only with such problems as colonial politics and astronomy, physiology and superstition; he goes also at length into the mathematical achievements of this time, even into a special criticism of the mathematical ideas of Hobbes. It is beyond this reviewer's more limited capacities to judge whether all this is always done with authority. The chapters on the political life are certainly excellent and even give some new viewpoints in the judgment of a time as often written about as the English Restoration. The chapters on sculpture and poetry and on the religious life of the period are not always on the same high level.

The Thirty Years War is the great event of this book. Professor Friedrich aims, of course, to be an objective historian, but it seems that he is not completely free from a Protestant leaning, especially in overemphasizing the "extraordinary personality" of Gustavus Adolphus and "his usual moderation" and in overstressing the alleged "inner weakness" of the Counter-Reformation. Like many writers of the seventeenth century and some modern German historians, overflowing in pity for their nation's human sufferings and terrible physical destruction, Mr. Friedrich overrates the disastrous after-effects of this war that allegedly "thwarted German life for a hundred years." I am convinced that the brilliance of German Baroque architecture, sculpture and music, of literature and philosophy in the century between 1650 and 1750 testifies against these traditional laments that underrate the vitality of the German nation, evident again in our day.

REVIEWERS

Fred Wieck, formerly editor of the University of Chicago Press, is on the staff of the Newberry Library in Chicago.

Hugh S. Taylor is a member of the faculty of Princeton University.

George Miles is a free-lance critic whose home is now in Kirkwood, Mo.

Max Fischer teaches at the New School for Social Research in New York.

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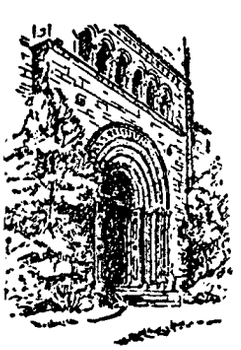

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